

PRESS RELEASE

**DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR TWIN FALLS/CASSIA AREA
FEDERAL LANDS PILOT PROJECT AVAILABLE FOR
REVIEW AND COMMENT**

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND COMMENT MEETING,
FEBRUARY 27, 2004, IDAHO FARM BUREAU BUILDING, 2732
KIMBERLY ROAD, TWIN FALLS, IDAHO**

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An updated draft proposal for a pilot project for more collaborative and effective management of intermingled federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") and Forest Service in southern Idaho is now available for public review and comment. The draft proposal is for structuring such a project for BLM and Forest Service administered lands located primarily in Twin Falls and Cassia Counties. A draft proposal overview and outline, along with a draft map of the project area, is available upon request from Bob Maynard at (208) 343-3434.

The current draft proposal grew from the Twin Falls/Cassia County Resource Enhancement pilot project proposal described in the December 2000 Federal Land Task Force Working Group report to the Idaho Board of Land Commissioners. However, the current draft proposal, prepared by Perkins Coie LLP as a consultant contractor for the Idaho Department of Lands, has been updated to reflect newer federal agency initiatives and other considerations. It provides a collaborative, inclusive public participation framework to enhance recent federal agency pilot project efforts. Central elements of the current draft proposal are:

- 1) The BLM and Forest Service should integrate management of federal lands in the project area under their existing "Service First" pilot authority. A single supervisory manager for both BLM and Forest Service administered lands should be appointed.
- 2) The Resource Advisory Council ("RAC") being established for the new BLM Twin Falls District should extend its advisory role to Forest Service and BLM administered lands in the project area.
- 3) To the extent reasonably practicable, the two federal agencies should use a single set of management rules for both BLM and Forest Service administered lands in the project area.

The draft proposal does not involve any transfer of federal lands or decisionmaking authority from the BLM or Forest Service to anyone else.

Perkins Coie LLP will conduct an informal public discussion and comment workshop regarding the draft proposal on Friday, February 27, 2004, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Idaho Farm Bureau Building, 2732 Kimberly Road in Twin Falls. The draft proposal reflects discussion at a December 16, 2003 workshop held at the Farm Bureau Building that was well attended by a broad spectrum of interested citizens. Written comments on the draft proposal may be submitted at the February 27, 2004 meeting or to the attention of Bob Maynard at Perkins Coie LLP, 251 East Front Street, Suite 400, Boise ID 83702.